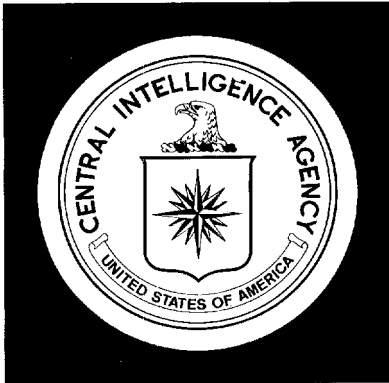


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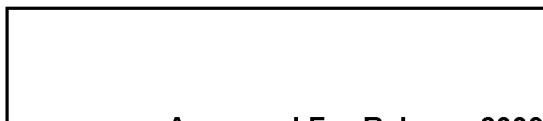
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Central Intelligence Bulletin

Top Secret

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9 December 1972



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Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023300120002-8

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023300120002-8

9 December 1972

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

25X1

LEBANON-FEDAYEEN: Troops clash with guerrillas near Israeli territory. (Page 6)

YEMEN (SANA): Pressures are building for prime minister's ouster. (Page 7)

25X1

SOUTH VIETNAM: "Political" prisoners (Page 10)

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023300120002-8

Next 5 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023300120002-8

LEBANON-FEDAYEEN: The reinfiltration of Palestinian guerrillas into the Lebanon-Israel border area has triggered clashes with the army.

Lebanese units moved against the fedayeen yesterday along the border with Israel and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. The guerrillas are apparently putting up stiff resistance against the government's motorized units and there have been a number of casualties on both sides.

The Lebanese have been very sensitive to fedayeen movements in the border area since the Israeli commando strike on 23 November against a fedayeen band just north of the border with Israel. In the present operations, the army presumably is engaging guerrillas who refused to leave border areas they reinfiltrated in defiance of Beirut's September ultimatum to fedayeen organizations.

The guerrillas' apparent willingness to provoke the Lebanese Army at this time may reflect an attempt by guerrilla leader Yasir Arafat to strengthen his sagging leadership position. He has been severely criticized by the movement's rank and file for his "capitulation" in agreeing to controls on the guerrillas.

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YEMEN (SANA): Pressures are building for the removal of Prime Minister Muhsin al-Ayni.

Al-Ayni is repugnant to conservative Yemeni leaders, and, in the aftermath of the unity agreement with Yemen (Aden), there is widespread belief that he is too willing to compromise with Adeni radicals.

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[REDACTED] a number of officials are refusing to do business with the prime minister and the nation's military chiefs are openly signaling their lack of trust in him.

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[REDACTED]

If al-Ayni is replaced, it should ease some of the political tension in Yemen. His departure might also assuage some of those who distrusted al-Ayni's approach toward unity discussions. Finding a replacement acceptable to Saudi Arabia and to the various political factions in Yemen will be difficult. Deputy Prime Minister Makki has been suggested as one possibility but he too is known to hold leftist views which may not be acceptable to some.

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Meanwhile, representatives of the chiefs of state of the two Yemens and Libya are to continue the unity discussions on 18 December. The plan for implementing the unity agreement is to be laid out at this meeting and subcommittees are to be appointed to draw up the details of the unity effort.

25X1

9 Dec 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

7

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023300120002-8

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023300120002-8

Next 2 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023300120002-8

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023300120002-8

NOTES

SOUTH VIETNAM: The government is concerned that the release of Communist "political" prisoners after a cease-fire would provide an easy new source of well-motivated manpower for the enemy. For some time Saigon has been considering means of continuing the incarceration of a substantial number of such prisoners following a cease-fire.

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The exact number of prisoners in South Vietnam convicted as Communist sympathizers is unknown. However, most estimates place the number at around 40,000.

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9 Dec 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

10

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023300120002-8

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25X1

Top Secret

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